



## **McGREGOR W. SCOTT**

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of California*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Sacramento**  
501 I Street, Suite 10-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Tel 916/554-2700  
TTY 916/554-2877

**Fresno**  
2500 Tulare St., Suite 4401  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Tel (559) 497-4000  
TTY (559) 497-4500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Mary Wenger  
(916) 554-2730  
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae>

### **SACRAMENTO COUPLE SENTENCED FOR DIRECTING ILLEGAL GAMBLING RING**

#### **Couple Forfeits Over \$350,000 in Proceeds Five Other Defendants Convicted in Federal Court, Eleven in State Court**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that PRASERT SOMSINSAWASDI, 60, and his wife NOY SOMSINSAWASDI, 47, both of Sacramento, were sentenced today by United States District Judge D. Lowell Jensen in connection with their operation of an illegal gambling business in the Sacramento area. PRASERT SOMSINSAWASDI was sentenced to 18 months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release. NOY SOMSINSAWASDI was sentenced to one month in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release. The defendants were also ordered to forfeit \$351,440 in cash, constituting proceeds of the illegal gambling business and money realized from the sale of a seized property purchased with illegal proceeds. The funds have already been seized or turned over to investigating agents. Both defendants pleaded guilty to conducting an illegal gambling business on August 14, 2007; defendant PRASERT SOMSINSAWASDI also pleaded guilty to conspiracy to launder proceeds of the illegal business.

The case is the product of a lengthy joint investigation by the FBI and the California Department of Justice, Division of Gambling Control. The investigation culminated in the execution of five arrest warrants and 14 search warrants in Sacramento, Yolo, and Fresno Counties on August 16, 2006.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Benjamin B. Wagner and Anne E. Pings, who prosecuted the case, the SOMSINSAWASDIS, in their earlier guilty pleas, admitted that they operated an illegal lottery organization that sold lottery tickets through residences, Asian markets and small video stores throughout the Sacramento area and beyond. PRASERT SOMSINSAWASDI also admitted that he laundered cash proceeds of the scheme by routing cash to an associate, who then issued him bi-monthly "payroll" checks in the same amounts in order to create fictitious wage income.

Five other persons have been convicted of federal felony offenses in the case:

- On March 8, 2007, defendant SOUKUANE SAELEE, 49, of Sacramento, was sentenced to one year in prison, to be followed by a three year term of supervised release. He also

agreed to forfeit \$2,724 in seized proceeds of the illegal gambling business and to pay a \$100 assessment. SOUKUANE SAELEE had previously pleaded guilty on November 30, 2006, to conducting an illegal gambling business. In his plea agreement, he admitted that the store which he managed, Lee's Market at 3815 Marysville Blvd in Sacramento, had been used to make sales of illegal lottery tickets as part of the gambling ring.

- Also on March 8, 2007, defendant MOUANG SAELEE, 45, of Sacramento, the wife of SOUKUANE SAELEE, was sentenced to two years probation, including three months of home confinement, for her role in the gambling ring, and ordered to pay \$100 assessment. She had also pleaded guilty on November 30, 2006, to conducting an illegal gambling business.
- Also on March 8, 2007, defendant LA SOUKASENE, 42, also of Sacramento, was sentenced to two years probation, including three months of home confinement, for her role in the gambling ring. She also agreed to forfeit \$3,416 in proceeds of the illegal gambling business and to pay \$100 assessment. She had also pleaded guilty on November 30, 2006, to conducting an illegal gambling business. In her plea agreement, she admitted that she directed illegal lottery ticket sales at the store which she managed, the South Area Market at 5220 Fruitridge Road, in Sacramento.
- On April 23, 2007, defendant RONNIE AIR PHIMMACHANH, 48, of Sacramento, pleaded guilty to conducting an illegal gambling business. In his plea agreement, he admitted that the store which he managed, the Air Video market at 565 Eleanor Avenue in Sacramento Lee's Market at 3815 Marysville Blvd in Sacramento, had been used for illegal sports betting and to make sales of illegal lottery tickets as part of the gambling ring. He is scheduled to be sentenced on December 11, 2007. In his plea agreement he agreed to forfeit \$636 in seized proceeds of the illegal gambling business and to pay a \$100 assessment.
- On October 23, 2007, defendant CHAO LEE, 33, of Sacramento, pleaded guilty to misprision of a felony in connection with his assistance to the gambling ring. He also agreed to forfeit \$5,000 in proceeds of the illegal gambling business and to pay \$100 assessment. Sentencing in his case is scheduled for January 15, 2008.

In addition to the individuals prosecuted in federal court, eleven other persons involved in the illegal gambling scheme have been convicted of misdemeanor offenses in Sacramento and Yolo County Superior Courts.

- On April 11, 2007, Phetdavong Phiakhamta and Srithian Singkumkhong, who managed the TCC Video store at 2920 Marysville Blvd in Sacramento, were sentenced in Sacramento Superior Court to 30 days and 20 days in custody respectively, and each ordered to serve 36 months probation and pay \$200 restitution, after pleading guilty to misdemeanor violations under the California Penal Code of permitting a building to be used for an illegal lottery.
- On April 10, 2007, Bao Her and Tou Xiong, who managed the TB Video store at 6685 Stockton Blvd in Sacramento, were each sentenced in Sacramento Superior Court to 20 days in custody, 36 months probation and \$200 restitution, after pleading guilty to

misdemeanor violations under the California Penal Code of permitting a building to be used for an illegal lottery.

- On April 18, 2007, Adam Keomeunangsong and Vien Keomeuangsong, who managed Keo Video store at 1040 West Capitol Avenue in West Sacramento, were each sentenced in Yolo Superior Court to serve 36 months probation and pay a \$5,000 fine, after pleading guilty to misdemeanor violations under the California Penal Code of bookmaking.
- On March 27, 2007, Mai Chong Lo and Seng Lee, who managed the L&L Video Thai Hmong store at 6420 Stockton Blvd in Sacramento, were each sentenced in Sacramento Superior Court to 36 months probation, after pleading guilty to misdemeanor violations under the California Penal Code of permitting a building to be used for an illegal lottery.
- Also on March 27, 2007, Cha Cheng, who managed the USC Video store at 2825 Norwood Avenue in Sacramento, was sentenced in Sacramento Superior Court to 36 months probation, after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor violation under the California Penal Code of aiding an illegal lottery.
- On October 27, 2005, Chou Vang and Mai Yang, who managed the Hmong Video store at 3540 Norwood Avenue in Sacramento, were sentenced to 45 days in prison each, and three years of probation, after each pleading guilty to a misdemeanor violation under the California Penal Code of bookmaking.

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